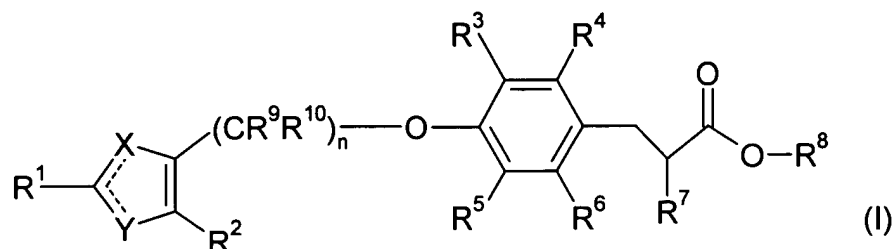


What is claimed is:

1. A compound of formula (I)



wherein

X is N and Y is S; or
X is S and Y is N;

R¹ is aryl or heteroaryl;

R² is hydrogen, lower-alkyl or fluoro-lower-alkyl;

R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ independently from each other are selected from hydrogen, hydroxy, lower-alkenyl, halogen, lower-alkyl, fluoro-lower-alkyl, hydroxy-lower-alkyl, lower-alkoxy-lower-alkyl, lower-alkoxy, fluoro-lower-alkoxy, hydroxy-lower-alkoxy, and lower-alkoxy-lower-alkoxy, wherein at least one of R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ is not hydrogen,

or

R³ and R⁴ are bonded to each other to form a ring together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and R³ and R⁴ together are -CH=CH-S-, -S-CH=CH-, -CH=CH-O-, -O-CH=CH-, -CH=CH-CH=CH-, -(CH₂)₃₋₅-, -O-(CH₂)₂₋₃- or -(CH₂)₂₋₃-O-, and R⁵ and R⁶ are as defined above;

R⁷ is lower-alkyl, lower-alkoxy, lower-alkenyloxy, aryloxy or aryl-lower-alkoxy;

R⁸ is hydrogen or lower-alkyl;

R⁹ and R¹⁰ independently from each other are hydrogen, lower-alkyl, lower-alkenyl, cycloalkyl, phenyl or [1,3]dioxan-2-ethyl;

n is 1, 2 or 3;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

2. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R⁷ is lower-alkoxy, lower-alkenyloxy, aryloxy or aryl-lower-alkoxy; R⁹ is hydrogen; and R¹⁰ is hydrogen.
3. The compound according to claim 1, wherein X is N and Y is S.
4. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R¹ is aryl.
5. The compound according to claim 4, wherein R¹ is phenyl or phenyl substituted with 1 to 3 substituents independently selected from the group consisting of lower-alkyl, lower-alkoxy, halogen and CF₃.
6. The compound according to claim 5, wherein R¹ is selected from phenyl, 4-isopropyl-phenyl, 4-chloro-phenyl, 4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl and 3,5-dimethoxy-phenyl.
7. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R² is lower-alkyl or hydrogen.
8. The compound according to claim 7, wherein R² is methyl or hydrogen.
9. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ independently from each other are selected from hydrogen, halogen, lower-alkyl and lower-alkoxy, wherein one or two of R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ are not hydrogen, or R³ and R⁴ are bonded to each other to form a ring together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and R³ and R⁴ together are -CH=CH-S-, -S-CH=CH-, -(CH₂)₃₋₅-, -CH=CH-CH=CH-, -O-CH=CH- or -O-(CH₂)₂₋₃-, and R⁵ and R⁶ are hydrogen.
10. The compound according to claim 9, wherein one or two of R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ independently from each other are selected from halogen, lower-alkyl and lower-alkoxy, and the others are hydrogen.
11. The compound according to claim 10, wherein R⁴ is methyl and R³, R⁵ and R⁶ are hydrogen.

12. The compound according to claim 9, wherein R⁵ and R⁶ are hydrogen; and R³ and R⁴ are bonded to each other to form a ring together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and R³ and R⁴ together are -CH=CH-S-, -S-CH=CH-, -(CH₂)₃₋₅-, -CH=CH-CH=CH-, -O-CH=CH-, or -O-(CH₂)₂₋₃-.

13. The compound according to claim 9, wherein R⁵ and R⁶ are hydrogen; and R³ and R⁴ are bonded to each other to form a ring together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and R³ and R⁴ together are -CH=CH-S-, -(CH₂)₃₋₅-, or -CH=CH-CH=CH-.

14. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R⁷ is lower-alkyl or lower-alkoxy.

15. The compound according to claim 14, wherein R⁷ is lower-alkyl which is ethyl or lower-alkoxy selected from ethoxy and isopropoxy.

16. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R⁸ is hydrogen.

17. The compound according to claim 1, wherein n is 1.

18. The compound according to claim 1, wherein n is 2.

19. The compound according to claim 1, wherein n is 3.

20. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R⁹ and R¹⁰ independently from each other are hydrogen, lower-alkyl or cycloalkyl.

21. The compound according to claim 20, wherein R⁹ and R¹⁰ are hydrogen.

22. The compound according to claim 1 selected from the group consisting of
[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-{4-[2-(5-methyl-2-phenyl-thiazol-4-yl)-ethoxy]-benzo[b]thiophen-7-yl}-propionic acid,
[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-{4-[2-(4-isopropyl-phenyl)-thiazol-4-ylmethoxy]-3-methyl-phenyl}-propionic acid,
[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-{3-fluoro-4-[2-(4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl)-thiazol-4-ylmethoxy]-phenyl}-propionic acid,

[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-{2-methyl-4-[2-(5-methyl-2-phenyl-thiazol-4-yl)-ethoxy]-phenyl}-propionic acid,

[rac]-3-{4-[2-(4-Chloro-phenyl)-thiazol-4-ylmethoxy]-2-methyl-phenyl}-2-ethoxy-propionic acid,

(2S)-3-{4-[2-(4-Chloro-phenyl)-thiazol-4-ylmethoxy]-2-methyl-phenyl}-2-ethoxy-propionic acid,

(2S)-3-{2-Chloro-4-[2-(4-chloro-phenyl)-thiazol-4-ylmethoxy]-phenyl}-2-ethoxy-propionic acid, and

[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-(3-fluoro-4-{2-[2-(4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl)-thiazol-4-yl]-ethoxy}-phenyl)-propionic acid,

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

23. The compound according to claim 1 selected from the group consisting of [rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-(3-fluoro-4-{3-[2-(4-isopropyl-phenyl)-thiazol-4-yl]-propoxy}-phenyl)-propionic acid;

[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-{5-ethoxy-2-fluoro-4-[2-(4-isopropyl-phenyl)-thiazol-4-ylmethoxy]-phenyl}-propionic acid;

[rac]-3-(4-{2-[2-(3,5-Dimethoxy-phenyl)-5-methyl-thiazol-4-yl]-ethoxy}-benzo[b]thiophen-7-yl)-2-isopropoxy-propionic acid;

(S)-3-{4-[2-(4-Chloro-phenyl)-thiazol-4-ylmethoxy]-2-fluoro-phenyl}-2-ethoxy-propionic acid;

2-Ethoxy-3-(2-methyl-4-{1-[4-methyl-2-(4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl)-thiazol-5-yl]-ethoxy}-phenyl)-propionic acid;

2-Ethoxy-3-(2-methyl-4-{2-methyl-1-[4-methyl-2-(4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl)-thiazol-5-yl]-propoxy}-phenyl)-propionic acid;

2-(4-{Cyclopropyl-[4-methyl-2-(4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl)-thiazol-5-yl]-methoxy}-2-methyl-benzyl)-butyric acid;

[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-{4-[2-(4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl)-thiazol-5-ylmethoxy]-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro-naphthalen-1-yl}-propionic acid; and

[rac]-2-Ethoxy-3-{4-[4-methyl-2-(4-trifluoromethyl-phenyl)-thiazol-5-ylmethoxy]-naphthalen-1-yl}-propionic acid;

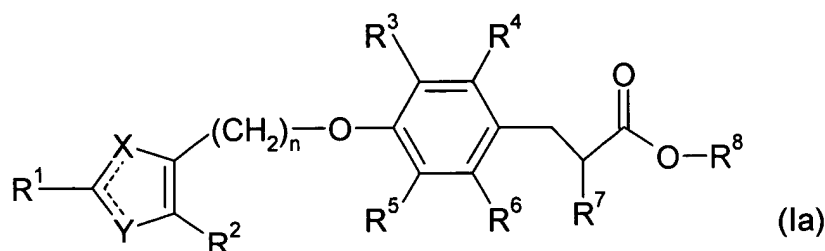
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

24. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt according to claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier .

25. A method for the treatment of non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus in a patient and in need of such treatment, which comprises administering a compound or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof according to claim 1 to said patient in an amount of from about 1 mg to about 1000 mg per day.

26. The method according to claim 25, wherein said amount administered is from about 1 mg to about 100 mg.

27. A compound of formula (Ia)



wherein

X is N and Y is S; or
X is S and Y is N;

R¹ is aryl or heteroaryl;

R² is hydrogen, lower-alkyl or fluoro-lower-alkyl;

R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ independently from each other are selected from hydrogen, hydroxy, lower-alkenyl, halogen, lower-alkyl, fluoro-lower-alkyl, hydroxy-lower-alkyl, lower-alkoxy-lower-alkyl, lower-alkoxy, fluoro-lower-alkoxy, hydroxy-lower-alkoxy, and lower-alkoxy-lower-alkoxy, wherein at least one of R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ is not hydrogen, or R³ and R⁴ are bonded to each other to form a ring together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached, and R³ and R⁴ together are -CH=CH-S-, -S-CH=CH-, -

CH=CH-O-, -O-CH=CH-, -CH=CH-CH=CH-, -(CH₂)₃₋₅-, -O-(CH₂)₂₋₃- or -
(CH₂)₂₋₃-O-, and R⁵ and R⁶ are as defined above;

R⁷ is lower-alkoxy, lower-alkenyloxy, aryloxy or aryl-lower-alkoxy;

R⁸ is hydrogen or lower-alkyl;

n is 1, 2 or 3;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.